

**Guadalupe, San Antonio, Mission, and Aransas Rivers and Mission,  
Copano, Aransas, and San Antonio Bays Basin and Bay Area Stakeholder  
Committee (BBASC) meeting**

Thursday, August 22, 2013 at 10:00 am  
GBRA River Annex, 905 Nolan Street  
Seguin, TX 78155

**MINUTES**

**Members Present:** Suzanne Scott, Chair; Diane Wassenich, Vice-Chair; Tyson Broad; Thurman Clements; Roland Ruiz; James Dodson for Ken Dunton; Jack Campbell; Jay Gray; Milan Michalec; Chris Hale; Jerry James; Mike Mecke; Con Mims; James Murphy; Mike Peters; Hope Wells for Robert Puente; Jennifer Ellis; Doris Cooksey

**Public Comment**

James Dodson, San Antonio Bay Partnership, informed BBASC members that the second annual San Antonio Bay Day will be held on September 28, 2013 at Seadrift Bayfront Park in Seadrift, TX. He informed the BBASC that sponsors are still needed for the event and encouraged members to attend. In addition, Mr. Dodson discussed his efforts to form a work group to look at the benefits to environmental flows of aquifer storage and recovery (ASR) projects and invited members to contact him to join in the discussion.

**Discussion and Agreement on Agenda**

The members agreed to accept the agenda as presented.

**Approval of Minutes from June 27, 2013 Meeting**

The minutes from the June 27, 2013 BBASC meeting were approved by consensus.

**Discussion and Appropriate Action Regarding Soliciting Nominations for Regional Water Planning Group Vacancy on Stakeholder Committee**

GSA BBASC Chair Suzanne Scott informed the members that the deadline for submitting nominations for the vacancy for the Interest Category of Regional Water Planning was extended to be consistent with previous GSA BBASC nomination processes. Members agreed to officially open the position to nominations and it was clarified that potential nominees do not have to be a member of a Regional Water Planning Group or endorsed by a group, but that the Chairs of Regional Water Planning Groups N, J, and L would be informed of the vacancy for possible nominations. In addition, any nominations already submitted would still be considered. Members unanimously agreed to an October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013 nomination deadline.

**Discussion Regarding Appropriated Funding for Environmental Flows Work Plan for Adaptive Management for Guadalupe-San Antonio Basin**

Mrs. Scott provided an overview of the letter received from the Science Advisory Committee (SAC), Chairman Robert Houston, notifying Bay and Basin Area Stakeholder Committees of the SAC's tentative positions regarding funding recommendations to the Environmental Flows Advisory Group (EFAG). The letter also requested more information from BBASC's concerning funding needs of each basin. Furthermore, Mrs.

Scott presented the Work Group's efforts in drafting a letter to the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) and the SAC outlining suggested funding criteria recommendations. Most discussion between members focused on clarifying the BBASC's position concerning the already allocated \$750,000 as a funding base rather than a funding cap, whether funds received should be limited in scope to scientific studies versus strategies, and development of a scoring and evaluation criteria for submitted proposals. With regards to the SAC letter, members were mostly in agreement that it should be expressed that the BBASC considers the \$750,000 as a funding floor, that the GSA BBASC has additional funding needs, and that HB4/SB4 funds should not completely be limited to scientific studies but include any projects that refine and validate work plan elements as well as strategies.

During this time, Dr. Ruben Solis of TWDB indicated that TWDB was open to working with the GSA BBASC to develop a scoring criterion for proposals. Therefore, a work group was formed to aid TWDB in the development of a proposal scoring criteria, which members expressed would ideally take into account both work plan priority rank and combination of work plan elements. Finally, it was agreed among members the TWDB would handle "conflict of interests" during the funding process.

#### **Presentation by USGS on Gage below Saltwater Barrier**

Karl Winters, USGS Texas Water Science Center Surface Water Specialist, presented information concerning computing stream discharge using the index-velocity method specifically with regards to the newly installed USGS gage below the saltwater barrier at SH35 near Tivoli, TX. He indicated that this method was particularly useful in determining discharge for streams with variable backwater, tidal influence, and/or seasonal variations in vegetation or algae and is appropriate when more than one discharge can be measured for a given stage. At the time of the presentation, 8 streamflow measurements had been collected at the new gage ranging from 24 - 3,100 cfs. Mr. Winters indicated more measurement points are needed to determine index-velocity relationships at the gage. Members inquired if continuous salinity measurements were being recorded and whether discharges at SH35 can be compared to discharge measurements of upper gages to characterize losses or gains within the system. Mr. Winters stated that no continuous salinity measurements are being recorded and that the data, if collected in the same manner at other gages, could be compared.

#### **Presentation by Texas General Land Office (GLO) on Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning Processes**

Kate Zultner, General Land Office Planning and Policy Coordinator, presented information concerning the Texas Coastal Management Program (TCMP) with regards to long-term Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning. To guide planning development, Mrs. Zultner indicated that a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was formed in 2012 to evaluate issues of concern and critical areas for each of the four designated coastal regions across Texas. Additionally, she stated the next steps in the TCMP Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning process are to have a Data Standards Committee gather priority data sets, develop a spatial planning tool to detail current natural resources in regions using Resource Management Codes (RMC), and website development.

### **Discussion with Tim Bonner regarding Work Plan Implementation**

Dr. Tim Bonner, Texas State University and GSA BBEST Member, provided insight into his September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012 email to the GSA BBASC regarding the Work Plan for Adaptive Management and presented an overview of how the GSA BBASC could utilize the scientific method to better meet their charge, specifically with regards to refinement and validation of e-flow recommendations. He demonstrated how e-flow recommendations could be refined via a hypothesis testing approach of flow versus water quality parameters. He further explained how validating e-flow recommendations might also be accomplished through predicting and modeling of flow-species abundance relationships using *Rangia* Clams. Dr. Bonner also stated that SB2/TIFP is a separate process and is not a refinement or validation of e-flow recommendations. Members expressed interest in these approaches and inquired as to how differing parameters, such as dissolved oxygen and temperature, would be balanced if analyses resulted in disparate environmental flows as well as how well a priori (formed or conceived beforehand) predictions take into account natural variation. Dr. Bonner responded that the analyses need to be systematic in nature to best resolve dissimilar results and that while variation makes validation difficult, a priori predictions are still needed. This was followed by a discussion by members concerning which e-flow recommendations should be validated. Members were in agreement that e-flow recommendations as adopted in the Chapter 298 rules are the most appropriate choices for validation.

### **Set Next meeting Date, Time and Location**

A doodle poll will be sent to members to determine the next GSA meeting date.

### **Possible Agenda Items for the next GSA BBASC Meeting**

Members discussed the following items for future agendas:

- State Methodology for Estuarine Inflows (TPWD - Cindy Loeffler)

### **Public Comment**

David Mauk, General Manager of Bandera River Authority and Groundwater District, indicated that the Medina River had recently stopped flowing and thanked the San Antonio River Authority for aiding in fish rescue efforts for the Guadalupe Bass.

Sam Vaughn, GSA BBEST, clarified that the state estuarine methodologies do involve linking flows with species abundances.

### **Meeting Adjourned**